

# **The Synod of Eastern Australia**



## **Minutes**

**Of the 163<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting  
Held at Wantirna Victoria  
3<sup>rd</sup> May to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

# CONTENTS

Opening.....	2
Retiring Moderator's Sermon.....	2
Rolls of Presbytery.....	2
Election of Moderator 2010.....	3
Administration Committee.....	3
Moderator's Address .....	3
Law and Advisory Committee.....	4
Correspondence Item 1: Overture from Northern Presbytery.....	5
Correspondence Item 2: Overture from Southern Presbytery.....	6
Inter-Church Relations Committee.....	7
Delegates from Other Churches .....	7
Presbytery Reports.....	8
Missions Committee Report.....	8
Training of Ministry Committee.....	8
Church and Nation .....	9
Youth and Fellowship.....	9
Presbyterian Banner.....	9
Website .....	9
Superannuation Committee.....	10
Finance Committee Report .....	11
General Treasurer's Report.....	12
Notice of Motion: Electronic Banking.....	12
NSW Trust Corporation.....	12
Queensland trust Corporation .....	12
Trustees for Victoria .....	12
Guest Speaker: Rev Dr Peter Adam.....	13
Report from Examiners of Records .....	13
Moderator-Elect for 2011 .....	13
Time and Place of Synod 2011 .....	13
Treasurer's Report re Cost of Synod.....	13
Thanks.....	14
Law & Advisory Committee Answers to Reasons for Dissent: Mr Steel & Mr Neil.....	14
Missions Evening.....	15
Closure of Synod 2010.....	15
Principal Acts of Synod .....	16
Addresses from Delegates from Other Churches .....	17

**10.1 OPENING**

Within the Wantirna Church building of the Melbourne congregation, on Monday 3rd May 2010, at 4.30pm, the Synod of Eastern Australia met and was constituted with worship, conducted by the Moderator, the Rev JA McCallum.

**10.2 MODERATOR'S SERMON**

Mr McCallum read from Revelation 1 and spoke particularly to the verse 20: *"The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."* The Lord Defined His Church: Lampstands holding up the light of Christ, who is the light of the world. The Lord warned of Dangers to His Church: the danger of maintaining truth at the expense of love, the danger of compromising truth, the danger of false self-opinion. The Lord spoke of the Destiny of His Church: "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline", a weak and failing Church, but still His Church with the promise of eternal glory. The Moderator welcomed members and guests to the meeting of Synod.

**10.3 ROLLS OF PRESBYTERIES**

The Certified Rolls of Presbyteries were tendered. Apologies for non-attendance from those marked † below. The moderator made special mention of those attending Synod for the first time.

**Northern Presbytery**

Armidale  
Brisbane

Hastings  
Northern Rivers

**Ministers**

DP Smith  
Vacant  
WJW Hanna (Res Supply) †  
AL Tripovich †  
RW Murray †

**Commissioned Elders**

K Dawson †  
J Greensill  
D Hamilton  
J McPhee

**Central Presbytery**

Hawkesbury/Nepean  
Hunter/Barrington  
Manning  
St. George's

Synod Appointment: TI Leggott (Seconded to AIM)

DK Muldoon  
SR Tamata †  
GD Ball  
JA McCallum

GA Neil  
DS Upton  
RR Jones †  
AH Steel (Treasurer)

**Southern Presbytery**

Geelong  
Knox  
Knox  
Knox  
Narre Warren  
Ulverstone

MG Smith  
RS Ward  
TW Yoa (Res Supply)  
AA Miranda (Res Supply)  
S Bajema  
Vacant

DPT Manly  
J Dekter  
T Buck  
DJ Kerridge

**10.4 ASSOCIATION OF DELEGATES FROM OTHER CHURCHES**

The Convener of the Inter-Church Relations Committee, Rev GD Ball, introduced Rev Ed Blackwood, delegate from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia. The Moderator welcomed Mr Blackwood and it was resolved that Mr Blackwood be associated with the court.

**10.5 THANKS**

It was resolved that the retiring Moderator be thanked for his services during the year and for his sermon, and that it be published in *The Presbyterian Banner*.



The session was opened with praise and prayer at 9.00am, the Moderator read from Haggai 2 and shared in devotions from the text. The court engaged in a time of prayer.

### 10.13 MINUTES

The minutes of Session 2 were read and confirmed

### 10.14 LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Convener, Mr Ward, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved as follows:

1. Synod remit the following overture to Presbyteries for their consideration and approval or otherwise. The voting is to be recorded and the result given by extract minute to the Clerk of Synod by 31 December 2010.

WHEREAS it is desirable that church property be held on uniform trusts as far as practicable to avoid confusion and to simplify administration,

AND WHEREAS the late F. Maxwell Bradshaw, MA, LL.M., our honorary Procurator (legal advisor) 1942-92, was advisor on trust law to the Victorian Government for many years and author of the standard text *The Law of Charitable Trusts in Australia* (Butterworths, 1983), and prepared the *Free Presbyterian Church Property Act 1953* of the Victorian Parliament which enabled union of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria with the PCEA in 1953;

AND WHEREAS Mr Bradshaw stated that 'the proposed amendment [of the 1918 Act] does not affect the constitution or laws of the Church in any way whatsoever, except in so far as it would remove certain legislative hindrances at present operating which restrict at certain points effect being given to the constitutional principles maintained by the church', such as restriction on the use of investment income for stipend beyond the first \$300, lack of statutory recognition of our Presbyterian system of government);

AND WHEREAS Mr Bradshaw urged the amendment of the 1918 Act of Parliament covering property in New South Wales so that it be as far as possible in line with the Victorian Act, and drafted the amendment for us;

AND WHEREAS subsequent discussions have shown good unanimity at Synod level and at small points it has been adjusted accordingly as for instance retaining the existing title "The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia;"

SYNOD, before approving the text of the amendment to the 1918 legislation, pass same to presbyteries for their approval or otherwise, inviting any comments presbyteries may feel appropriate, noting that Section 2(2)b on page 9 of 2010 Synod Reports is to be deleted.

Mr Steel dissented with reasons as follows:

1. The Draft Amendment needs updating.
2. It's been submitted in its present form to Presbyteries on three previous occasions without being able to secure sufficient agreement to present it to the NSW Parliament for enactment.
3. Past objections regarding Church Polity have not been addressed by Synod.
4. As the resolution suggests the enactment of an alteration to existing law where the proposal involves a change affecting the church generally and is designed to be of permanent force, the Draft Amendment should therefore be transmitted to Presbyteries under the *Barrier Act 1697* procedure.

Mr Neil adhered to the reasons for dissent. The Convener of the Law and Advisory Committee indicated that the Committee would give answers to the reasons for dissent.

2. Synod note and approve the additions to the Handbook noted in the Report, and note that the copy of the Handbook/Decision Book on the website will be updated with Synod decisions from time to time.

### **10.15 ASSOCIATION OF DELEGATES FROM OTHER CHURCHES**

The Moderator noted the presence of Rev Dr Henk de Waard, delegate from the Christian Reformed Church of Australia. The Moderator welcomed Mr de Waard and it was resolved that Mr de Waard be associated with the court.

### **10.16 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 1: OVERTURE FROM NORTHERN PRESBYTERY**

Synod took up consideration of Correspondence Item 1, an Overture from Northern Presbytery.

Mr DP Smith stated the Overture: Whereas,

[1] When the vote was taken at the 2009 meeting of Synod between an Overture from the Northern Presbytery requesting the Synod of Eastern Australia to rescind the "Act allowing optional alternative questions and formula while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952"; delay any attempt to introduce a new form of Subscription until such a time as greater unity of mind can be secured on the matter; and effect the change under Barrier Act procedure," and a motion from Mr. Ward, "That the prayer of the Overture be granted in the following terms: Synod is satisfied that the position of the church is safeguarded by the terms of the 2008 Act, notes the advantage to the church of the clear statements on church-state principles in it, and, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, directs that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952" the result was equal, the moderator abstained from voting, and there was no change in the decision of 2008.

[2] And Whereas from this vote it was evident that the majority of the Synod of 2009 were in favour of at least some change in the existing legislation of 2008 entitled "Act Allowing Optional Alternative Questions and Formula while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952;"

[3] And whereas the Northern Presbytery recognizes that a change in the direction of the second motion, while not meeting all its desires relating to this matter, is more satisfactory than the retention of the 2008 Act in its present form;

[4] And whereas the Northern Presbytery believes that the adoption of the second motion would promote harmony and consistency in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia'

Now therefore the Northern Presbytery respectfully Overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia to direct, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, "that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952." or do otherwise for this object as it, in its wisdom, may seem best, Mr. Peter Smith and Mr. Ray Murray to appear in support of the Overture.

The Overture was sustained and the prayer of the Overture was granted in the following terms:

For further assurance of where a minister stands, and without prejudice to those who disagree with the 2008 "Act allowing Optional Alternative Questions and Formula", while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952", Synod resolves that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952.

### **10.17 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 2: OVERTURE FROM SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY**

Synod took up consideration of Correspondence Item 2, an Overture from Southern Presbytery.  
Mr Bajema stated the Overture:

**WHEREAS** a minister is ordained for life unless removed by disciplinary process,  
**AND WHEREAS** tenure of a particular congregation may be limited without breaching this principle;  
**AND WHEREAS** the above positions are illustrated in the retirement of the Old Testament priests at age 50 (Numbers 8:24-25), and can also be seen in the appointment of men to particular tasks for a specified time which may or may not be extended;  
**AND WHEREAS** it is respectful both to a minister who is advanced in years (and perhaps feeling unreasonable pressure to remain) and to the congregation in which he serves (who may find their minister's age and infirmity render him not able adequately to fulfil the duties of his office) to set a mandatory retirement date from tenure of a particular charge, but without precluding the minister from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply;  
**AND WHEREAS** retirement provision for ministers through Superannuation is much more satisfactory than in earlier times (cf. Second Book of Discipline VII.17)  
**AND WHEREAS** it was clearly the mind of Synod 1984 that normally ministers retire from inducted service at age 65 except with the express concurrence of the congregation and presbytery of the bounds but this rule was rescinded in 1991 purportedly because it should have passed under the Barrier Act and had not;  
**AND WHEREAS** a fixed rule avoids the difficulty and delicacy of negotiation in those cases where a respected minister may be unable to appreciate he has reached the point where he should resign his charge.  
**AND WHEREAS** a mandatory retirement age from tenure of a particular charge is the practice in the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, and is common in other churches of Reformed character;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Southern Presbytery humbly overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia appointed to meet at Melbourne 3/5/2010 to take these premises into consideration and to enact,

‘Synod decides that, in line with the law of the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, ministers inducted to charges or appointed to full time positions are obliged to retire by the 30th September following attainment of their 70th birthday.

Nothing in this Act precludes a man retired under this provision from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply, nor the customary position of a minister being permitted to retire with the consent of Presbytery upon attaining 65 years, or earlier if adequate medical grounds are shown.

This Act applies to all existing and future ministers but shall not apply to any existing minister of the PCEA who registers dissent against it applying to him at the time it is made by Synod or who, not being present at the Synod, within seven days thereafter lodges his dissent in writing with the Clerk of Synod who is to forthwith report the same to the Clerks of Presbyteries and to Synod 2011 as part of the Administration Committee Report.

This Act may be cited as ‘Act Concerning Retirement Age Of Ministers From Inducted Service.’

**OR** to do otherwise for this object as Synod may deem best.

The prayer of the Overture was not granted there being equal votes for and against. The Moderator declined the casting of a vote.

Mr Yoa arrived back from Sudan and was welcomed to the meeting of Synod.

### **10.18 CLOSURE OF SESSION**

Notices of motion were called for. The session closed with prayer at 12.35pm.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

The session was opened with prayer and praise at 2.00pm. The minutes of session 3 were read and confirmed.

#### **10.19 INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS**

The Convener the Rev GD Ball, being moderator, vacated the chair to present the report. Mr McCallum took the chair. Mr Ball presented the report and read letters of greeting from a number of churches. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved:

1. Synod thank Rev. Peter Smith for his willingness to serve as a member of the Missions Committee of the ICRC; and that Mr. Smith's travelling expenses be covered by Synod funds to the extent that they are not reimbursed by the ICRC.
2. Synod appoint Rev. Peter Smith to be our representative to attend the Free Church of Scotland Assembly in May 2010 and bring greetings.
3. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA) recognises in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia (RPCA) a church whose worship and doctrines are similar to its own, with adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith a major requirement for office bearers. The Synod notes the long and cordial relationship between the PCEA and the RPCA formalised in 2004 at the request of the RPCA. The Synod wishes to establish a relationship of mutual eligibility with the RPCA to deepen and further strengthen the bond of fellowship between us. By this the Synod of the PCEA understands and is satisfied that the RPCA Presbytery may issue calls to ministers of the PCEA, and likewise affirms the right of the PCEA Presbyteries to process calls to RPCA ministers. In neither case does this mutual eligibility impinge on the right and responsibility of the relevant RPCA or PCEA Presbytery to require full and satisfactory Presbyterial certificates of character and attainment before admission. This may include clearance under any relevant child protection legislation, and assurance that any incoming minister is familiar with the history, doctrine and practice of the church so that he is able to subscribe to the formula of subscription intelligently and heartily and participate harmoniously and constructively in the life of the church. Where an RPCA minister is called by a PCEA congregation such a meeting with the Presbytery may take place after a call is issued and before it is accepted, in order that the called minister may assess more closely whether he should accept the call, and know, should he accept it, that he would be admitted. This Act may be cited as the Mutual Eligibility Act (Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia) 2010. (The resolution was passed unanimously.)
4. Synod recognises the long association which the PCEA has had with the Presbyterian Free Church (formerly the Free Church of Central India) and offers fraternal relations in terms of our Act of Synod 1993.
5. Synod notes with thankfulness the recent developments concerning members of the Australian Free Church and the Southern Presbytery.

#### **10.20 DELEGATES FROM OTHER CHURCHES**

The Convener of Inter-Church Relations Committee invited delegates to address the Synod.

Rev Ed Blackwood, from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia, was introduced and addressed the court.

Rev Dr Henk de Waard, from the Christian Reformed Church of Australia, was introduced and addressed the court.

The moderator thanked both men for their addresses. The addresses and those greetings received from other churches will be included as an appendix to the minutes.

Mr Ball returned to the Moderator's chair.

#### **10.21 PRESBYTERY REPORTS**

Mr DP Smith presented the report for Northern Presbytery and answered questions. Mr Muldoon presented the report for Central Presbytery. Mr Ward presented the report for Southern Presbytery. It was resolved that the reports be received.

#### **10.22 MISSIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Convener, Rev DP Smith, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. After discussion, it was resolved:

1. That Synod express its continued prayerful support and interest in the work of Rev Trevor Leggott in his ministry with Australian Indigenous Ministries.
2. That Synod delegates direct their congregations attention to the prayerful and financial support needed for Rev. Trevor Leggott in his ministry with Australian Indigenous Ministries
3. That Synod encourage congregational members to consider volunteering to help as native English speakers in either San Andres or the Annie Soper School.
4. That Synod adopt the budget for 2010 and express general agreement with the estimates for 2011.

#### **10.23 TRAINING OF MINISTRY**

The Convener, Rev MG Smith, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. The Convener presented the proposed deliverances. It was resolved that:

1. Synod gives thanks to God for answering prayer in regard to the provision of students/ applicants for the ministry. Synod exhorts the church to continue to ask the Lord of the harvest and Head of the church to send out more workers both for our situation and for the wider work of God's kingdom.
2. Synod varies the wording of ACT ANENT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE [Act 14, Class 2 Synod 1983], paragraph c as follows: After "to be conducted by correspondence and/or lectures" add these words: "and/or through use of the internet and/or through use of digital media".

Paragraph c therefore now reads: "To prepare and implement, with the approval of Synod, a course of training in biblical subjects, theology and church history, suited for elders and other interested persons, to be conducted by correspondence and/or lectures and/or through use of the internet and/or through use of digital media, certificates to be issued upon successful completion of each section."

Some time was spent in discussion of matters relevant to the training of men for the ministry.

#### **10.24 CLOSURE OF SESSION**

Notices of motion were called for and the session was closed with prayer at 5.45p.m.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

The session was opened with praise and prayer at 7.00pm. The minutes of session 4 were read and confirmed.

**10.25 CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE**

The Convener, Rev Dr DK Muldoon, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received as a report of the convener.

**10.26 YOUTH & FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

Rev DP Smith presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved that:

1. Synod thank all Sunday School teachers and youth leaders for their dedicated work in teaching the young people.
2. Synod thank Mrs Margaret Kinder for sending birthday greetings to children.
3. Synod thank Mrs Irene Steel for setting and assessing Search Work questions and awarding prizes to the children.
4. Synod exhort Deacons Courts of the church to include the Youth and Fellowship Committee Working Funds as a worthwhile special collection to seek financial support from their congregation.
5. Synod request that certificate statistics be sent through to the convener for reporting purposes.

**10.27 THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER REPORT**

Mr Bajema presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved that the Media Committee investigate all aspects of the production of the Presbyterian Banner including consideration of moving to bi-monthly publication.

It was further resolved that: Synod record its appreciation to Rev Ray Murray for his work as Editor of the Banner from September 2006 to December 2009, and particularly his production of the online version of The Presbyterian Banner. Synod also records its appreciation to all those who helped in the production of the magazine.

**10.28 WEBSITE**

Mr MG Smith presented an update of the Church Website noting that a number of changes had recently been made to improve the access to and operation of the site.

**10.29 CLOSURE OF SESSION**

Notices of motion were called for and read and the session was closed with praise and prayer at 8.45pm.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

The Synod met at the All Nations Church building at Mulgrave. The session was opened with praise and prayer. The Moderator read from Haggai 2:10-19 and spoke to the text, noting that dirt and defilement is contagious whereas holiness is not. The prophet tells the people that they are defiled. God requires obedience before sacrifice, and disobedience brought judgement, but God promises blessing through obedience. These were pointers to the saving work of Christ and the cleansing and holiness that comes by grace through faith.

The minutes of Session 5 were read and confirmed.

### 10.30 SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

The Convener, Rev Dr Ward, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. The convener presented the proposed deliveries and it was resolved that:

1. Synod approve the changes to the Superannuation Levy set out in the Report, viz: All congregations pay an annual levy of 5% of minimum stipend (or 1.0% if aid-receiving) and 2.0% for any additional minister in the same charge.

In addition, each congregation with an inducted or supply minister pays 9% SG for each of its ministers but not beyond the end of the quarter following attainment of the age of 70 years. An ordained PCEA minister eligible for call giving full time residential supply receives SG based on minimum stipend; all others receive SG based on actual earnings so long as they meet the legal threshold (currently \$450 per month).

2. Synod agrees the Levy changes apply from 1/1/2010, and for 2010 are to be calculated on the minimum stipend as at 1/1/2010 (\$42,861), so that self-supporting congregations pay \$1500 per quarter (9% + 5%) and others \$1071 per quarter (9%+1%), or \$1179 per quarter (9%+2%) and vacant congregations \$536 per quarter (5%) as the case may be.
3. Synod remind fund members of the advisability of seeking professional advice in regard to both choice of Fund and investments within any particular fund, and the effects of recent changes in Government legislation, so that it meets their particular needs, as this is their responsibility and not that of the church.
4. Synod request Sessions and Deacons' Courts to keep a close eye on ministers' leave entitlements to ensure ministers do not suffer burn out through failure to take it, and that Presbyteries keep this in mind in the annual examination of records to ensure outstanding entitlement is minuted at least once a year.
5. The Synod approve the amended Regulations attached to the Report.

### 10.31 NOTICE OF MOTION

Mr Steel presented his notice of motion regarding Superannuation. The motion was received:

Synod approve in principle a new system for the collection and payment of contributions to ministers' superannuation as outlined in the attached "Superannuation – Proposed Model".

The system to embody the following principles:

- a. All ministers receive an equal rate of superannuation (Equality).
- b. Congregations provide the actual amount of contributions made to their minister(s)'s Superannuation Fund.
- c. *Aid-receiving* Congregations provide a reduced amount of contribution with the balance being made up from the Superannuation Support Fund.

The Superannuation Committee to draft Regulations for approval by Synod 2011 with view to the new system being implemented from 1st July 2011.

On being put to the vote the motion was defeated.

### 10.32 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Convener, Mr A Steel, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved that:

1. We record our thanks to God for sufficiency in the provision of the ministry for another year.

The proposed deliverance 2. was defeated:

2. The Minimum Stipend – Cash and Non-cash components, (Excluding Manse, Car and Telephone) for 2010/2011 be \$822 per week (\$42,861 Pa.) ie. to remain unchanged from the last review on 1/1/09. The six monthly reviews due on 1/7/10 and 1/1/11 to be suspended and the situation to be reviewed and recommendation made to Synod 2011.

It was further resolved that:

3. Stipend Assistance for 2010/2011 (1/5/10 to 30/4/11) to the following Deacons' Courts, be approved up to the following limits:

\$ 21,400 – Armidale (up to 50% of Minimum Stipend - \$42,861 as at 1/1/09)

\$ 14,000 - Hawkesbury-Nepean

\$ 20,000 - Narre Warren

\$ 5,000 - Ulverstone

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\$ 60,400 Total

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As it is estimated there will be insufficient Synod funds available to fully provide the amount of aid requested, Synod approves allocations hereunder in terms of *Proposed Deliverance 4*:

\$ 15,610 - (35%) Armidale

\$ 10,704 - (24%) Hawkesbury-Nepean

\$ 14,718 - (33%) Narre Warren

\$ 3,568 - (08%) Ulverstone

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\$ 44,600 (100%) Estimated funds available

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4. a) Stipend relief be always granted on a strictly needs basis and subject to the availability of funds at the time of the request. Requests to be made at least on a quarterly basis from 1<sup>st</sup> May annually.

b) Should there be insufficient Synod funds in hand, at the time of the annual Synod, to meet requests for stipend relief from congregations; the amount allocated to each congregation shall be equal to the percentage of their assistance sought when applied to the total of stipend relief applied for by all congregations.

c) Actual amounts approved for individual congregations are to be set aside in Synod's books of account so as to ensure funds are in hand to meet requests if and when made by individual congregations.

d) Where Synod is unable to provide the full amount of aid requested and funds are received for stipend relief after it has approved allocations for assistance sought by congregations, such funds are to be allocated to the respective congregations in the same proportion as the approved allocations were made. Aid-receiving congregations may then take up additional funds to bring total aid received up to the limit approved by Synod.

e) Any undrawn funds previously set aside for congregations remaining as at 30th April each year are to be transferred to the main Synod Stipend Relief account.

### **10.33 GENERAL TREASURER'S REPORT**

The General Treasurer, Mr AH Steel, presented his report. It was resolved that the report be received. The Treasurer presented the proposed deliverances. It was resolved that:

1. Synod confirm the charging of the deficit of \$38,969 as at 31/12/09 in *Stipend Relief Working Funds* to *Synod General Working Funds*.
2. Synod confirm the use of the National Australia Bank internet banking facility by the General Treasurer since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009.

### **10.34 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Mr Steel presented a notice of motion relating to bank accounts: It was resolved that the motion be received. It was resolved:

That the Treasurer be authorised to open bank accounts with Bendigo Bank and utilise other services including their Internet Banking facility – Bendigo e-banking.

Authorised signatories to operate Synod's bank account(s) be any two of DE Kerr, TI Leggott, JA McCallum, KR Shaw and AH Steel.

Authorised users of *Bendigo e-banking* be any two of TI Leggott, KR Shaw and AH Steel.

### **10.35 NSW TRUST CORPORATION**

The Clerk presented the report on behalf of the Trustees. It was resolved that the report be received.

### **10.36 QUEENSLAND TRUST CORPORATION**

The Clerk presented the report on behalf of the Trustees. It was resolved that the report be received.

### **10.37 THE TRUSTEES FOR VICTORIA**

The Secretary Mr AH Steel presented the report on behalf of the Trustees. It was resolved that the report be received.

### **10.38 CLOSURE OF SESSION**

The session was closed with praise and prayer at 12.35p.m.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

The session was opened with praise and prayer at 2.00pm. Visitors were welcomed to the meeting. The minutes of Session 6 were read and confirmed.

**10.39 GUEST SPEAKER: REV DR PETER ADAM**

The Moderator invited Mr Ward to introduce Rev Dr Peter Adam, principal of Ridley College, Melbourne. The Moderator invited Dr Adam to address the Synod.

Dr Adam spoke on Calvin's Preaching: Nine Engagements under the headings:

1. Engage with God who is present and powerful.
2. Engage with the sixty-six "texts" of Scripture by expository preaching.
3. Engage with theology:
  - a. Biblical Theology
  - b. Systematic Theology
4. Engage humanity in preaching.
5. Engage with the congregation in the sermon.
6. Engage with the congregation as hearers.
7. Engage in training the congregation:
  - a. To receive God's words in sermons.
  - b. To read the Bible.
  - c. To teach and convert others.
  - d. To serve God in the world.
8. Engage the congregation in taking part in God's global gospel plan.
9. Engage in training up future preachers.

There followed a time of questions and responses with very interesting and helpful observations and reflections from Dr Adam. The Moderator invited Dr Adam to close the meeting by leading the Synod in prayer. The Moderator thanked Dr Adam for his address and wished him God's blessing in his ministry.

Following afternoon tea the Moderator invited Dr Adam to share briefly about Ridley College. Dr Adam spoke of an emphasis on theological training and of developing skills for ministry but this coupled with individual personal development.

**10.40 REPORTS OF EXAMINERS OF RECORDS**

The minutes of the Northern Presbytery for 2009-2010 were reported to be in order. The minutes of Southern Presbytery for 2009-2010 were reported to be in order. The minutes of Central Presbytery for both 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 were reported to be in order. It was resolved that the Presbytery records be attested.

**10.41 MODERATOR-ELECT FOR SYNOD 2011**

The Clerk, after reporting briefly on those who had served in more recent years, nominated Rev MG Smith. It was resolved that the Rev MG Smith be appointed Moderator-elect for Synod 2011.

**10.42 TIME AND PLACE OF SYNOD 2011**

It was resolved that Synod 2011 be hosted by the Knox Congregation at Wantirna in the first half of May 2011, with the date being determined by the Administration Committee and notice given by the end of October 2010.

**10.43 TREASURER'S REPORT RE COSTS INCURRED BY SYNOD 2010.**

The General Treasurer, Mr AH Steel, gave an indication of costs incurred by Synod 2010.

#### **10.44 THANKS**

The Moderator expressed his thanks to the previous Moderator for his challenging message at the opening of Synod. The Moderator expressed his thanks to the members of Synod for the spirit in which the meetings had been conducted.

The Moderator expressed the thanks of the court to the Clerk for his work. The Moderator expressed the thanks of the court to the Synod Treasurer for his dedication and efficient work.

The Moderator expressed that the thanks of the court to the Knox congregation for hosting the Synod and for their hospitality. The Moderator expressed thanks to the ladies for their presence, fellowship and assistance. The Moderator thanked the precentor for his leading of the psalmody praise during Synod.

Mr Ward expressed the thanks of the court to the Moderator for his leading of the Synod and for his devotional messages. The Synod expressed agreement through acclamation.

#### **10.45 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of sessions 7 were read and confirmed.

#### **10.46 CLOSURE OF SESSION**

The session was closed with praise and prayer at 4.40pm.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

### **SESSION 8                      WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009                      7.00PM**

The session was opened with praise and prayer.

#### **10.47      LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANSWERS TO REASONS OF MR STEEL AND MR NEIL**

1. Section 1 of the proposed amended Act is essentially introductory, and sections 2 to 10 are in the same terms as the 1953 Victorian Act which received unanimous assent under the Barrier Act and has been operated successfully for nearly 50 years, while Section 11 to 13 were recognised as desirable by Mr Steel and were in essence included in a draft prepared by St George's and considered by Synod in 1996, but rejected for other reasons. There are thus no valid grounds for regarding the proposed amended Act as doubtful or involving innovations dangerous or otherwise, and every reason to suppose unanimity can be best obtained by the approach outlined in the Report rather than reinventing the wheel with all the difficulties and delays that could involve.
2. The proposed amendment makes no change in our constitutional position, part of which is unalterable, and part of which includes lawful Synod decisions which may be passed from time to time, and in fact gives legislative sanction to our Presbyterian polity which the 1918 Act does not.
3. While there have been changes since 1953 in the powers of investment authorized for trustees under various State laws regulating such matters, there have been no changes in trust law that make the wording of the proposed Act outdated, and any changes that may be required by the Parliamentary draftsman would be essentially cosmetic in nature.

#### **10.48 MISSIONS EVENING**

The Moderator invited the Convener of the Missions Committee, Rev DP Smith, to introduce the missionary speakers.

Peter introduced Rev Paul Morris from Christian Witness to Israel and invited him to speak.

Paul shared about changes that would be likely in CWI in the near future with his expected return to the UK later in the year. Some factors which led him to decision, including that the mission has expanded, but there was a present need to build up the support base for the work, an area which Paul does not feel called to. Paul wished to focus more on Jewish evangelism.

Paul spoke of Kachan Park and his wife and their great ability to minister to Jewish people living in and visiting Sydney. There was a good contact point through using the book table and especially when Kachan engages unexpectedly in conversation in fluent Hebrew. This often opens up opportunities for further contact.

Paul spoke of CWI having a presence at the Body, Mind and Spirit Festival with special opportunity to speak with many Israelis expected to attend. Kachan and Paul were also looking to go to Korea to share about CWI and especially seeking those who may be called to the ministry to take up the challenge to work in mission to the Jews.

Paul spoke of local church involvement in Bellevue Hill, a community where many Jews live. The church was looking to outreach to the community with invitations to attend appropriate Bible studies. There was also a plan to do something similar with Andres Miranda in Doncaster in Melbourne.

The Convener then introduced Rev Trevor Leggott and Merv Topp and invited Trevor to bring an update of his ministry with AIM.

Trevor expanded on developments summarised in the Mission Committee Report and shared about the very positive developments with the first eight graduates having completed the Train the Trainer course in Theological Education by Extension. Trevor also spoke of the very encouraging applications from new personnel to take up work with the mission. One was a quite experienced man, an Australian who has served for many years in the UK and who has had good experience with cross-cultural mission work through European Christian Mission and Evangelical Press. Another man was currently completing Masters studies in Canada with a view to working in Biblical teaching and translation work. This man was married to an Aboriginal girl from Western Australia. It was very encouraging to see younger folk with a passion and desire to serve the Lord in mission work with our first Australians.

Trevor introduced Merv Topp, Victorian representative with AIM, and who has had long term missionary ministry amongst Aborigines. Merv shared something of what he has seen develop in the ministry of AIM over the years, and the very encouraging progress, but also commenting that there remained much to be done.

#### **10.49 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of this closing Session 9 were read and confirmed.

#### **10.50 CLOSURE OF SYNOD 2010**

Synod 2010 was closed with the singing of Psalm 27 and prayer and the benediction at 8.50pm.

TI Leggott  
Clerk

GD Ball  
Moderator

**ACTS OF SYNOD 2010**  
**Appended by the Direction of Synod (09.50)**

**Class 1 (Barrier Act Procedure)**

**Reference**

Nil

**Class 2 (Others)**

<b>No</b>	<b>Act</b>	<b>Reference</b>
1	Alternative Questions and Formula	10.16
2	RPCA Offer of Mutual Eligibility	10.19.3
3	PFC (India) Fraternal Relationship Offer	10.19.4
4	Training of Ministry Use of Internet/Digital Media	10.23.2
5	Superannuation	10.30.1,2
6	Stipend Relief Distribution	10.32.4
7	E – Banking and Bank Signatures	10.34

## **ADDRESSES FROM DELEGATES FROM OTHER CHURCHES**

Appendix (See 10.20)

### **ADDRESS BY REV ED BLACKWOOD OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

Elder brothers and other guests. Greetings in the name of Christ from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia. I apologise for the accent. It took me 45½ years to learn, and I have only had only 4½ years to unlearn it. I stand before thankful for the privilege to be with you. We share much in way of history and doctrine.

I am preparing to teach a Church membership Bible study in our congregation with baptised members and adherents. In such a study we look at our several denominational distinctives (not that we set out to make these distinctive, but they have become distinctive). Most of these we share with you (some in practice, but not fully in theology).

We are a small denomination, only three congregations. We have just under 200 members (full and communing and baptised) at end of 2008. I anticipate a small increase in 2009 but those statistics are not yet available. I appreciated the breakdown of your statistics by age – a useful indicator. Your statistics state “Typical attendance each Lord’s Day.” I would not be certain what that means if I were filling out the forms. We have decided to show in our statistics both an annual average attendance and the average attendance for 4th quarter of the year. This may assist – or may muddle your statistics.

We have four ministers, one who is retired and has been elected as ruling elder, one nearly full time at RTC and preaching at our McKinnon congregation, and anticipating retirement at the end of this year. We also have one student of theology in our congregation who has not yet been taken as a student under care. We have nine ruling elders, and one provisional session.

Here are some matters we are considering as a denomination. We are wrestling with questions of Deacons, presently we have board of managers in two of our congregations and one of our congregations has brought a paper to consider the formalising the recognition of the Biblical office of Deacon. We are also wrestling through the question of our Psalter. Considering recent modernisation of the Psalter of the RPCI (2004) and the RPCNA (2009) Psalter as a change from our present practice (using 1974 RPCNA Psalter).

I pastor a church plant in Frankston, south suburbs of Melbourne. We have only averaged one church plant every 35 years. But we do wrestle with reality of church planting and church revitalisation. In our McKinnon congregation we are seeking to revitalise/plant a new congregation among what is nearly the ashes of a former congregation.

Our Moderator is Andrew Stewart, Clerk is Joshua Feldman. We have a presence on the internet at [rpca.org.au](http://rpca.org.au) and [sermonaudio.com/rpca](http://sermonaudio.com/rpca). Email may be addressed to our denomination through [moderator@rpca.org.au](mailto:moderator@rpca.org.au) or [clerk@rpca.org.au](mailto:clerk@rpca.org.au).

Began a presence on SermonAudio.com last year which has given us an opportunity to extend our ministry in Australia and throughout the world. There is minimal presence on SermonAudio.com from Australia – I commend it to your congregations for consideration. Through SermonAudio.com we have also have been granted a sub-page on [reformedvoice.com](http://reformedvoice.com) – which is mostly RPCNA but other RPC congregations throughout the world.

In consideration of the “worldwide RPC,” we have RPC denominations in Ireland, Scotland, North America (including a Presbytery in Japan), a mission congregation in Cyprus, and a mission in Sudan. For some time now an item has been on our agenda concerning the Global RPC. Let me quote from our interchurch report coming to our next Presbytery. This interest in the “Global RPC” was prompted

by a discussion which Ed Blackwood had at a meeting some years ago in North America with some who were keen to develop a framework within which the unity of the Reformed Presbyterian denominations worldwide might be expressed. At present we are separate denominations with a similar background, a commitment to the Westminster Standards and similar Testimonies. In theory we are one denomination, separated only by distance, and if we were in the same territory we would come under the umbrella of one Synod. With much greater ease of transport and communication in the twenty first century, ought we not to consider the possibilities for better expressing our unity? We may (Presbytery meets Fri-Sat) propose that the federal framework of the Presbyterian Church in Australia could provide a model for discussing this challenge with other Reformed Presbyterian Churches.

We share with you a union in Christ and much by way of union in doctrine. I will be, D.V., this Lord's Day exchanging pulpits with Sjirk Bajema. My closest connection to your churches and ministry has been informal for the most part. I have shared attendance with many of you at the last 2 Banner of Truth conferences in Sydney. Our Geelong congregations have had joint services on a regular basis. Although there has been between us some discussion in the past of a merger of our two denominations. We expressed, I believe two years ago, we are not ready to join you, nor did we believe you were ready to join us. Although I believe that to still be the case, I do welcome continuing opportunities for us to celebrate our unity in Christ and His reformation of His church.

It has been a great blessing for me to be here and to sing psalms with you. I can think of very few things better than singing Psalms with a group of men. I must admit I was surprised at the occasional use of your small musical instruments (pointing to my cell phone as several went off at various time in the meetings, playing their tunes. :) If I might ask, could we sing Psalm 133 together?

I would like to invite you to join with us in the Geelong Bible Conference on 2-4 July with Pastor Ted Donnelly from RPC Ireland speaking. Thank you.

**ADDRESS BY REV DR HENK DE WAARD**  
**OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

Fraternal Greetings to PCEA Synod 2010

Thank you brothers for the invitation to be represented at your Synod as a fraternal delegate of the CRCA. It is a real joy to be here and to meet with you and observe proceedings. I bring you good wishes and greetings on behalf of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia. We pray that the Lord will bless you in your ministry and that through you the Gospel may be advanced in this nation.

We have a long relationship of mutual encouragement and mutual respect and I would hope that will continue. However, I think it is fair to say that it is not a highly functional relationship (except that on occasion we poach one another's ministers). Perhaps at a local level where our two churches are present there is a small degree of interaction. There are all kinds of cultural, historical and theological reasons for this fairly low level of interaction.

Perhaps the relationship was closest in the 1950's when a number of dislocated Dutch Calvinists came ashore. It was the PCEA here in Melbourne that provided spiritual shelter. We appreciated that so much that we wanted to be nice to you. So we began raising funds for an organ which (we thought) the PCEA could not afford!

A good 60 years have elapsed and by the grace of God our churches are still here and still delight in the Gospel.

Let me give a brief picture of where we are. Through the ups and downs of church life we have seen the triumphs of God's grace. Our own triumphs have been less spectacular. Much has changed within and without. The current generation no longer has any links with our Dutch heritage; structures that worked well in the past are in need of revision and denominational loyalties are not as strong as they used to be. There is far greater diversity within our ranks than ever before. The uniformity that used to mark us has given way to a growing diversity that concerns not a few of our members. Yet, I believe that there is still remarkable unity as far as commitment to the Gospel is concerned.

Particularly during the 1990's we witnessed a decline in numbers. There are many reasons for that. Some committed young people have gone elsewhere where they have sensed a greater freedom and involvement in the ministry of the church. Some have given up on the church altogether. That decline has now stabilized, in no small part due to the influx of many brothers and sisters from South Africa. In a few cases, the coming of these new members has revitalized some of our congregations.

We are struggling with the tension between being biblical and contemporary. In some ways we find it easier to be biblical (according to our understanding) than to be contemporary. Yet, we have to be both. In other words, we face the tension between our self-identity as a Reformed Church and ministering relevantly in the Australian context. There tends to be difference of opinion as to how that might work, where we should accommodate and what is non-negotiable. We want to know what the church is supposed to be and do in this world and how we can minister relevantly and with confessional integrity.

All these struggles are occurring against the background of a shortage of candidates for ministry. Our most recent Synod was very encouraging in its support for theological education at a high level and encouraging the churches to make greater use of the facilities we have. Synod also endorsed a new track into the ministry whereby a person can stay in his congregation for two years, take courses by distance and intensives with local support and mentoring and then complete the final two years at the Reformed Theological College.

In the meantime throughout the denomination there is ongoing debate and refocusing with an increasing emphasis on the centrality of the Gospel and the need for outreach and church growth. This renewed focus on the Gospel has led to a number of activities that motivate many to mission involvement. I mention such initiatives as:

- Target 21 –leadership training for young people
- Mission trips- Burma, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, Russia etc.
- Adoption of the four -fold task which has church planting at its heart
- Church planting- a number of church plants
- Significant initiatives in training men and women for ministry (not ordained) at the local level

All these activities are intended to advance the Gospel and as such they are good initiatives. Churches that are focusing on the Gospel and are willing to leave behind some unhelpful traditions and ways of being the church are having an impact on society. Some congregations struggle to survive or are declining. Obviously, for all of us as churches, it is not business as usual; our world has changed, our culture is changing and like it or not, within limits, we have to change with it!

How do ecumenical relations feature in all this? Some might feel that these relationships take up an inordinate amount of time and energy and do not really advance the cause of the Gospel. I believe that these relationships of mutual care, support and prayer are an important part of what it means to be part of the universal body of Christ. Even though there are differences among our two churches, we should not feel compelled to tell one another how wrong the other is on any and every issue. I think that is part of a mature relationship. Though, if we or you were convinced that there was a serious departure from biblical truth we would be duty-bound to speak to each other on that. You want to do that, for in my letter of invitation I was asked to address the ‘slippage from the Reformed position in the CRCA’. (An oral report was given re the context of a Conference held in Box Hill re the confessional integrity of the CRCA. Rev. Bajema presented a lengthy report on the Conference to PCEA Synod) We are grateful for the PCEA, what it stands for, its love of truth and its commitment to the Scriptures and the spread of the Gospel. We might all wish for a closer, more dynamic and functioning relationship. Is that out of the question?

What about the journey ahead? We are still on the way. We have not yet arrived. We look forward to the city whose builder and maker is God. In the meantime, there are threats and challenges, but we face these in the sure confidence of God’s covenant faithfulness and the certainty of the final destination. We wish you all the Lord’s strength for that journey and express our desire for both our churches in Paul’s words: Romans 15:5-6 *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rev.Henk DeWaard  
Fraternal Delegate  
Christian Reformed Churches of Australia

**GREETINGS FROM OTHER CHURCHES**  
**Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland**  
**Business of Synod Committee**



**CLERK OF SYNOD**  
15 March 2010

Dear Rowland,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish to thank you for the invitation to the Reformed Presbyterian Church to send a delegate to the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. We will not be able to send a delegate this year but value continued contact with your denomination even it is only through email and the I C RC every four years.

Please convey to your Synod the greetings of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. We appreciate the links we have with you and the mutual encouragement we can be to one another all be it at a distance. We pray that your work in the Lord will prosper under the direction of His sovereign will and that you will know much blessing during your meetings. We live in an age when more and more we must speak directly and clearly of our Holy and all powerful God to a disobedient people. Our prayer is that you will be enabled to address the issues confronting you always upholding the truth of God's word and the Kingship of Jesus Christ over every part of life.

We pray that we may be able to maintain and even strengthen our fellowship in Christ over the coming years.

Yours in Christ,

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E. M. McCollum (Clerk of Synod)

**Interchurch Relations Committee**  
**Reformed Churches of New Zealand**

Rev Bruce Hoyt, Reporter  
22 Awamoia Road  
Oamaru 9401  
New Zealand  
bruce.hoyt@gmail.com

Rev Michael Flinn  
Rev Paul Arcbbald  
Rev Dirk van Garderen

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To the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

Dear Brothers.

Thank you for your invitation to send a fraternal delegate to your upcoming Synod to be held (DV) from Monday 3rd May at the Knox PCEA in Wantirna, Melbourne. We would have liked to be present in view of our sister-church relationship with the PCEA. However, we are not able to send a fraternal delegate at this time.

We do extend warm greetings from your brothers and sisters in the Lord here in New Zealand knowing that you seek to serve the Lord in Australia as we do here in New Zealand. We commend you to His grace during your Synod meeting and pray that He may grant you wisdom from above as you make decisions in accord with His Word and our confessional standards which will honour Him and further the work of the Gospel.

We continue to pray for the Klazingas as they work toward shifting to Brisbane and taking up the call of the congregation there. We pray that the Lord may bless his ministry in your midst.

It was good to have your delegates to the ICRC 2009, Rev George Ball and Rev Rowland Ward, in our midst last October Hopefully they can convey something of the life and ethos of our churches to you in the absence of any delegate from the RCNZ.

May the Lord guide you in your deliberations.

With Christian greetings.

Rev Bruce Hoyt

## **The Orthodox Presbyterian Church**

### **Office of the General Assembly**

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The Rev. Donald J. Duff, Stated Clerk

March 16, 2010

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia  
The Rev. Trevor Leggott, Clerk of Synod  
PO Box 579  
Springwood, NSW,  
AUSTRALIA 2777

Dear Brethren,

As part of my duties as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church it is my pleasure to inform churches with which the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has ecclesiastical fellowship, or with whom we are in contact, about our General Assemblies. I want to inform you that the 77th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church will be meeting on July 7-14, 2010 at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois. The Assembly starts with a worship service at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 7.

We would be pleased to have your church send a fraternal delegate to attend the full meeting of the General Assembly. Fraternal delegates will be given the privilege of the floor, with the right to speak on matters before the assembly and they will be allowed to visit meetings of advisory committees. Fraternal delegates will also be asked to address the General Assembly to bring the greetings of your church.

If you will inform me of the name of your representative, I will see to it he receives agenda materials concerning our assembly. We would expect you to pay for the expense of sending your representative to the assembly but arrangements will be made for lodging and meals of fraternal delegates as guests of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church at the assembly. This year we have registration for the General Assembly on line. For further information see the registration form at under "General Assembly."

Mr. Mark T. Bube, who is a member of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, is the man designated by that committee to arrange for fraternal delegates from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to other churches. His address is Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 607 N. Easton Rd., Bldg. E, Willow Grove, PA 19090-2539. Please send to him any information about your assembly, which would be helpful in his arranging for fraternal delegates. If you have sent materials to me I have forwarded them to Mr. Bube.

We look forward to hearing from you with respect to your delegate. If your denomination is unable to send a delegate, we would be happy to receive a letter of greeting.

May the Lord richly bless your church and the work of Christ's kingdom.

Yours in Christ's service,

Donald J. Duff, Stated Clerk

607 N. Easton Rd. Bldg. E • Box P • Willow Grove, PA 19090-0920

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